

# PRIMARY HEALTH POST

Issue 5

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### Special Nurse

*Helpful, thoughtful, special  
nurse,  
It's your retirement, here's  
a verse.*

*For all those years, you  
helped the sick,  
All hard work, there was no  
trick.*

*You gave the proper dose  
and pills,  
Gained a lot of healthy  
skills.*

*Patients didn't want to  
wait,  
You took the time, as-  
sessed their state.*

*Sometimes when things  
became extreme,  
You took charge, and  
calmed the team.  
What we're really trying to  
say,  
You'll be missed, everyday!*

by AnitaPoems.com

# Kay Cares

Kay Steele has been working as a nurse for 40 years. A tireless profession, but one she embraced with much passion. She has nursed in different areas including acute care, palliative care, and most recently as a diabetes nurse educator.

She took on the role of diabetes nurse educator in 2003 for the newly formed health region. Kay helped build the diabetes program to where it is now. Some key accomplishments that Kay was instrumental in developing are:

- creating the first group of Diabetes Resource Nurses
- writing the region's first Diabetes Management Guidelines manual
- setting up team based clinics in many communities across the region. Her boss had to get Kay her own work car, as she was up and down highways 13, 9, 47, 6, on a regular basis and made it to the clinics when no one else was on the highway.
- helping write the clinical pathways for critical care
- establishing an annual diabetes education day for the regional diabetes teams
- developing a Diabetes Self-Study Module to help increase the knowledge of direct care staff who work with patients living with diabetes

The patients were her joy. She treated them with the utmost dignity and was dedicated in helping them to make their life better. She gently encouraged them to set their own goals and helped them work toward that goal. Kay speaks in a language that everyone understands and her smile could make anyone feel at ease.

Nurse Practitioner Nicki Ford shares this story... Kay told me once that she had told her kids—They may not take her advice or do what she thinks they should, but she will say her piece anyway because she wants them to remember she was there. As a registered nurse, as a palliative care coordinator and in her current role I definitely know Kay "was there" and in a very positive way.

Kay has decided to retire. We wish her all the best in the next phase of her life and remind her that the door is open and she is always welcome.

Thanks for everything Kay,  
you will be missed.

Yours sincerely,

Your team members

  
*Farewell*



# Kai Ora!

"Kai Ora" means "hello" or "welcome" in the Maori language. Upon my convocation at the University of Saskatchewan in June of 2011, I was very fortunate to have received one of the Hannon Travel Scholarships. The scholarship gave me the opportunity to visit New Zealand in November of last year to learn about the Maori culture in New Zealand as well as the New Zealand food culture.



The Maori people are the largest minority in New Zealand. I was able to visit one of the Maori villages while in New Zealand and got to take part in a traditional ceremonial feast. The Maori people traditionally cook their food in a "hangi", which is an underground earth oven. A hole would be dug in the ground and fire heated rocks would be placed at the bottom while trays of meat, vegetables and dessert would be stacked on top. The earth oven would then be covered by a woven cloth and the Maori people would put soil on top of the cloth. The food would sit in the oven to cook for 2-4 hours. The picture to the left shows some of the chicken trays cooked in the "hangi".

While in New Zealand, I also learned about the fruit industry. New Zealand's soil is very rich because of the volcanic ashes from the volcanoes in and around the country.



The kiwi industry is very popular and brings in millions of dollars a year. They would hire lots of "kiwi pickers" when the kiwis are ready to be picked and backpackers from around the world often get hired as a "kiwi picker" to work on the numerous kiwi orchards to make some money for their travels. While I was there, I made sure I had my fair share of kiwis at the flea market!

The wool and dairy industry are also big players in the New Zealand economy. Whenever I left the city and headed out onto the highways, I was always bound to see a sheep farm or dairy farm. I spent some time at a number of farmstays in New Zealand and got to meet a few woolly friends! Not only are the sheeps very cute, but the wool on their bodies are also quite pricey! A 100% wool sweater can cost around \$200-300 or more!



Aside from exploring New Zealand's Maori culture and food culture, I also took some time out to visit Hobbiton! There's no wonder why Peter Jackson chose New Zealand to film Lord of the Rings because New Zealand is a very beautiful and green country – perfect for any Hobbit's home!



*On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, I was asked to present to the students in the Division of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Saskatchewan on my Hannon Travel Scholarship. It provided me an opportunity to share my experience with them and to encourage them to apply for the scholarship so that maybe they, too, will have the opportunity to travel to a different country and explore a different culture and cuisine.*

*Lillian Ly*

Lillian Ly  
Registered Dietitian  
Cardiac Rehabilitation Coordinator  
Sun Country Health Region

# Sun Country Health Region Staff Experience Alaska

## *The operational principles for the Alaska model*

**R**elationships between customer-owner, family and provider must be fostered and supported

**E**mphasis on wellness of the whole person, family and community (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness)

**L**ocations convenient for customer-owners with minimal stops to get all their needs addressed

**A**ccess optimized and waiting times limited

**T**ogether with the customer-owner as an active partner

**I**ntentional whole-system design to maximize coordination and minimize duplication

**O**utcome and process measures continuously evaluated and improved

**N**ot complicated but simple and easy to use

**S**ervices financially sustainable and viable

**H**ub of the system is the family

**I**nterests of customer-owners drive the system to determine what we do and how we do it

**P**opulation-based systems and services

**S**ervices and systems build on the strengths of Alaska Native cultures

**Did you know...** Southcentral Foundation in Alaska offers primary health care services to the Native Alaskan people in a manner that caught the attention of SK Health and many others. They incorporated under the Tribal Authority in 1982 and assumed all primary care services from Alaska Native Medical Centre in 1998. The evolution into the Nuka System of Care is created, managed, and owned by the Alaska Native People – their vision: working together with the Native Community to achieve wellness by providing the highest quality health services for all Alaska natives.

Why are we listening to the Alaska Story?

- ◆ Evidence based generational change reducing family violence.
- ◆ 50% drop in urgent care and ER utilization.
- ◆ 40% drop in Hospital Admissions.
- ◆ 60% drop in specialist utilization.
- ◆ 20% drop in primary care utilization.
- ◆ Childhood immunization rate of 93%.
- ◆ Diabetes up to 50% of HbA1c below 7%.
- ◆ Employee turnover rates less than 12% annualized.
- ◆ Customer and staff overall satisfaction over 90%

**What is happening in...** SK Health in partnership with HQC recommended each region send a team to experience Alaska through the Southcentral Foundation's Core Concepts Training and Annual Conference. Sharon Bauche (Board Chair), Kay Steele (Diabetes Educator), Wanda Miller (PHC Team Facilitator), and Naomi Hjertaas (Community Health Services Manager-Redvers) travelled to Alaska to experience Primary Health Care, the Alaska way in June, 2011.

**What was done...**Core Concepts training is offered at Southcentral as the orientation for all staff. It is designed to offer all staff with the history, organizational structure and philosophy, and the tools staff need to build relationships and work together within their organization. In June core concepts training was offered to a group outside the organization for the first time.

More than one hundred participants, teams from SK, Maryland, Wisconsin, and Scotland, experienced Southcentral's core concepts training. What an amazing experience!

Core concepts training is set up to: understand how we impact others, learn how to articulate your story from the heart, understand your personal and professional aspirations, and learn methods of good dialogue and productive conversations. The organization believes that it is all about relationships – the foundational piece of our philosophy of care – our ability to develop relationships with customers is directly related to the effectiveness with them.

## **Better relationships = Healthier customers.**

Healthy relationships positively impact all areas of life for us personally. When we as individuals have safe, trusting, supportive connections with others, we tend to naturally move toward others with a desire to connect and develop deeper relationships with them. Our own experience with acceptance, forgiveness, and grace is directly related to our ability to expend it to others'.

Following the 3 day Core Concepts training Sharon Bauche joined the group to attend the Nuka Conference. We had the opportunity to follow 3 paths of presenters – Introduction to the Nuka System of Care, A Behavioral Stream, and Operational Stream. Here we learned how the programs and services work within their system; we toured their Primary Health Care Sites, met with program and operational staff, and received a better understanding of how data and stats drive their programs. The voice of the customer owners is clearly heard and acted upon in the Nuka system of care. We were able to meet the people that make it happen and experienced how they truly work and live their vision, mission and principles as they provide care to the Alaskan people.



To hear more about the Alaskan Experience please feel free to contact Wanda Miller, Naomi Hjertaas, Kay Steele and Sharon Bauche – the experience was valuable and we would love to share more of it with you.



Quality Improvement in  
Primary Health Care

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*Primary Health Care is about staying healthy, preventing illness and injury, managing chronic conditions, treating acute medical illness, promoting healthier living and accessing the best health provider for the job.*

## Launch of the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program

The Sun Country Health Region (SCHR) launched the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program in late December of 2011. The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program is suitable for those with heart related conditions as well as those who are at high risk for heart disease. The program is meant to help people learn how to live with their heart related condition, and to also help explain how they can reduce the risks of developing a more serious problem in the future. Currently, referrals to the program are only coming from the Regina General Hospital for those people who had to go up to Regina due to a cardiac event. There are plans to expand the program so that physicians providing service to SCHR patients and clients can refer people to the program as well.

The SCHR's Cardiac Rehabilitation Program is based on the Heart Manual. The Heart Manual is a flexible self-management program that is individualized to help individuals learn at their own pace. It covers a variety of topics related to heart disease and helps clients learn how to set action plans for themselves to achieve their lifestyle goals. The Heart Manual also provides information for family members and caregivers of those with a heart related condition.

The Cardiac Rehabilitation Program is meant to help answer some of the questions clients may have about their health such as: understanding what heart disease is, how to reduce the risk factors, learning more about how food and nutrition affects the heart, different types of medication, exercise, and relaxation.

The program is still in its early stages and there are plans for the program to expand and reach out to those at high risk for heart disease for primary prevention.

If anyone has any questions related to the Cardiac Rehabilitation Program, please feel free to contact me via e-mail at [Lillian.Ly@schr.sk.ca](mailto:Lillian.Ly@schr.sk.ca).

Wishing you good health,

Lillian Ly  
Registered Dietitian  
Cardiac Rehabilitation Coordinator  
Sun Country Health Region

